(c) which of the States are in favour of imposing levy on commercial use of ground water;

(d) whether the Prime Minister had advocated a holistic approach to water conservation, instead of subsidizing it for economic and commercial use and hinted to "put the prices of water to save it"; and

(e) if so, whether Government propose to launch a movement for water harvesting as a mission of conservation on a pattern adopted in Chennai?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ): (a) to (e) The National Congress on Ground Water was held on 11th September, 2007 at New Delhi. During the Congress, the discussion focussed on sustainable management of ground water. The need for strengthening awareness/education programmes and taking up of steps for enhancing water use efficiency was emphasised. The outcome of the Congress are given in Statement (*See* below). The issue of levy on water was not discussed with the State Government during the Congress.

The Prime Minister in his inaugural address stated that water is a national resource and an integrated view is to be taken of the country's water resources. The Prime Minister also emphasized the need for a paradigm shift in dealing with demand management as also on the importance of efficient, economic and more rational use of water. He opined that every living being has the right to potable water. He called for economic use of water specially in irrigation, construction and other sectors and observed that subsidising the economic and commercial use of water could not continue. He also stated that adequate emphasis on water conservation specially ground water has to be ensured.

Government encourages programme of water harvesting and ground water recharge.

Statement

Outcome of the Congress

- Emphasized the role of education, awareness and voluntary participation of stakeholders in ground water conservation.
- Stressed the need for equitable, efficient and sustainable water use policy.
- Expressed urgency for complete synergy in the activities of all stakeholders in the sustained development of ground water resources.
- Outlined new techniques for encouraging more income per drop of water.
- Resolved to prevent over-exploitation and pollution of ground water.
- Highlighted the role of Panchayats in ground water management.
- Stressed upon the adopted of integrated approach for water conservation; for improving water security system and increasing agricultural production.

New gas pipelines in the country

*73. SHRI MOHAMMED AMIN:
SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have approved the request of Gas Authority of India Limited (GAIL) for inviting expression of interest (EoI) for 5 new natural gas pipelines in the country, including the 876 km long Jagadishpur-Haldia pipeline;

(b) if so, the details of the agencies which have been awarded these jobs along with the progress and the schedule of completion of the jobs; and

(c) the source of gas to fulfil the requirements of various States, including West Bengal, Jharkhand and Bihar, through which the proposed pipelines are supposed to traverse?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): (a) Yes, Sir. Government has issued authorizations to GAIL (India) Limited for laying 5 new natural gas pipelines in the country, including the 876 km long Jagdishpur-Haldia pipeline.

(b) The project has to be completed within 36 months from the start of the project, *i.e.*, from the date of first notification under sub-section (1) of Section 3 of the Petroleum and Minerals Pipelines (Acquisition of Right of User in Land) Act, 1962. The work has not been awarded.

(c) Jagdishpur-Haldia pipeline will have a provision for bi-directional flow. The sources of gas indicated for the pipeline are Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) imported by Petronet LNG Limited and Hazira LNG Limited, and indigenous gas, including from the offshore fields of Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) in Krishna-Godavari basin.

Payment of taxes by foreign companies in India

*74. SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that foreign companies are not paying Capital Gains Tax in India for their property and share holding gains;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that they are not paying tax, on the above gains, even to their own countries; and

(c) if so, what is the revenue loss to Government on account of these foreign companies, which have claimed exemption in both India and in their own countries?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) Foreign companies are not required to pay tax in India on capital gains arising from transfer of property or shares if they are resident of the countries with whom India's Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement provides for residence based taxation of such gains. This means that the gains are taxable in the country in which the foreign company is resident.

(b) The tax liability of a foreign company on capital gains in its country of residence depends on the domestic law of that country.

(c) It is not possible to quantify the revenue loss to the Government on account of the companies which have claimed exemption from tax on capital gains in India as well as in their respective countries as the relevant data is not available.

Availability of newspapers at airports during flight

*75. SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that some passengers were offloaded from a private airline flight recently because they had required for a Hindi Newspaper in the aircraft;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to take or have taken action against the airlines for insulting the National Language;

(c) how many newspapers/dailies have been prescribed for the passengers in the waiting lounges at different airports in the country, paper-wise, language-wise and airport-wise;

(d) whether the Ministry has devised any criteria for subscription of regional dailies for the passengers in the aircrafts; and